

## Message Text

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ORIGIN IO-03

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /004 R

66011

DRAFTED BY IO/HDC:JJBUCZACKI:DD

APPROVED BY IO/HDC:FGAULDFELDT

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R 071032Z MAY 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 110854

FOLLOWING REPEATS TANGIER 0173 ACTION SECSTATE INFO RABAT  
CASABLANCA 3 MAY

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L TANGIER 0173

RABAT FOR PAUL HIGDON AND NORM ANDERSON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR EPAP EAGR MO

SUBJECT: KIF PRODUCTION IN AL-HOCEIMA PROVINCE

1. DURING THE COURSE OF AN INTERVIEW DEVOTED TO AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT, MOHAMED ABAROU, AN ENGINEER WITH THE SERVICE OF LA MISE EN VALEUR (DEVELOPMENT SERVICE) AT AL-HOCEIMA, TOLD CONSULATE OFFICER THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF MOROCCO IS ACTIVELY CONSIDERING PUTTING THE REGIE DE TABAC IN CHARGE OF AL-HOCEIMA'S 3,600 HECTARES (ABOUT 8,896 ACRES) OF KIF FIELDS IN THE NOT TOO DISTANT FUTURE. ABAROU SAID THAT THE GOM VIEWS TOBACCO GROWING AS THE ONLY ACCEPTABLE ALTERNATIVE TO THE LUCRATIVE KIF PRODUCTION. SINCE A SIZEABLE PORTION OF AL-HOCEIMA'S POPULATION HAS NO OTHER MEANS OF LIVELIHOOD, THE GOM LEGALLY PERMITS THE GROWING OF KIF BUT ON THE CONDITION THAT ALL KIF HARVESTED BE SOLD TO THE GOVERNMENT. HOW-  
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EVER, THIS APPROACH HAS MET WITH LITTLE SUCCESS DUE TO

THE AVAILABILITY OF HIGHER PROFITS ON THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET AND THE CORRUPTION OF CERTAIN LOWER ECHELON BUREAUCRATS CHARGED WITH ENFORCING THE MOROCCAN LAW. AN ALTERNATIVE CROP CAPABLE OF PROVIDING AN INCOME ROUGHLY EQUIVALENT TO THAT OF KIF MUST THEREFORE BE INTRODUCED. ANY AGREEMENT CONCLUDED WITH THE TOBACCO MONOPOLY WOULD STIPULATE THAT ALL INHABITANTS CURRENTLY ENGAGED IN KIF GROWING BE RETAINED AS FIELD HANDS FOR THE GROWING OF TOBACCO. THE PRINCIPLE OBSTACLE, ABAROU SAID, WILL BE OBTAINING THE AGREEMENT OF REGIE DE TABAC TO PROVIDE A WAGE COMMENSURATE WITH THE PROFITS ACQUIRED FROM ILLEGAL TRAFFICKING IN KIF.

2. COMMENTS: DUE TO THE GEOGRAPHIC NATURE OF AL-HOCEIMA'S KIF GROWING TERRAIN, THE GOM IS PROBABLY CORRECT IN CONCLUDING THAT TOBACCO OFFERS THE ONLY REALISTIC ALTERNATIVE TO KIF PRODUCTION. IT IS UNLIKELY, HOWEVER, THAT WAGES EARNED AS TOBACCO GROWERS CAN OFFSET PROFITS ACQUIRED THROUGH ILLEGAL INTERNATIONAL KIF TRAFFICKING. NEVERTHELESS COMBATTING CORRUPTION THROUGH EFFECTIVE LAW ENFORCEMENT COUPLED WITH THE AVAILABILITY OF A REASONABLE WAGE FOR THE TOBACCO GROWER WOULD AT LEAST SERVE AS A BEGINNING. ELIMINATING THE KIF TRAFFICKER ENTIRELY WILL NOT BE ACCOMPLISHED IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE REGARDLESS OF THE APPROACH TAKEN BY THE GOM. SMUGGLING IS, AFTER ALL, A WAY OF LIFE IN THE RIF AND THE AVERAGE RIFFI IS QUITE ADEPT AT IT.

3. THE REPORTING OFFICER WAS LEFT WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT AT LEAST SOME MOROCCAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ARE CONCERNED ABOUT KIF TRAFFICKING AND WOULD LIKE TO DO SOMETHING EFFECTIVE TO COMBAT THIS VERY DIFFICULT PROBLEM. EASTMAN UNQUOTE SISCO

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT, PROVINCE  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 07 MAY 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** saccheem  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976STATE110854  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** JJBUCZACKI:DD  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760177-0865  
**From:** STATE  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
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**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19760579/aaaacpdi.tel  
**Line Count:** 94  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ORIGIN IO  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** saccheem  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 07 MAY 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <07 MAY 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <23 SEP 2004 by saccheem>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** KIF PRODUCTION IN AL-HOCEIMA PROVINCE  
**TAGS:** SNAR, EPAP, EAGR, MO  
**To:** GENEVA  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006